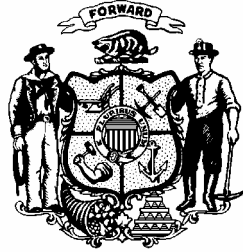


Public Service Commission of Wisconsin



Universal Service Fund Telemedicine Equipment Program

Fiscal Year 2004 Grant Application Guidelines and Forms

**Application Deadline
October 15, 2003**

Introduction

The Wisconsin Universal Service Fund (USF) was created to promote and assist with the availability and affordability of telecommunications services within Wisconsin. Companies that provide telecommunications services in Wisconsin are required to contribute to the Universal Service Fund. The Public Service Commission (Commission) has established several programs, all of which are funded by the USF. One of the USF programs, the Telemedicine Equipment Program, is to provide funding to nonprofit medical clinics or public health agencies for the purchase of telecommunications equipment.

Applicants may apply for funding from the USF to cover costs for purchasing telecommunications equipment. Total funding for this program is limited to \$500,000 per fiscal year. There is no specified dollar limit for any particular project. Funding shall be on a state fiscal year basis (July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004).

Application Deadline

If submitted via **U.S. Mail**, applications must be **postmarked by October 15, 2003**. If applications are **faxed**, they must be **received by October 15, 2003**. If **hand delivered** to the Commission's offices, they must be received in Record's Management on the second floor by **4:00 p.m. on October 15, 2003**. This grant cycle is for funds available for the state fiscal year beginning July 1, 2003.

Eligible Applicants

Nonprofit medical clinics and public health agencies are eligible for the Telemedicine program. For purposes of the Telemedicine Equipment Program, nonprofit medical clinic includes any medical facility that:

1. Is a nonprofit organization governed by a board of directors;
2. Serves federally designated health professional shortage areas as defined in 42 USC § 254e(a)(1), medically underserved areas, or medically underserved populations, and;
3. Does one or both of the following:
 - a. Provides service to all patients regardless of insurance status,
 - b. Uses a sliding fee scale for uninsured patients based on income status.

The definition of public health agency that is applicable to the Telemedicine program includes:

1. The Department of Health and Family Services;
2. Local health departments as defined in § 250.01(4), Wis. Stats.;
3. Health care facilities or programs operated by a tribe, or tribal organization under the Indian Self-Determination Act (25 USC § 450f et seq.).

Anticipated Funds Available

In accordance with Wisconsin Administrative Code § PSC 160.115(3), a maximum of \$500,000 may be disbursed under the Telemedicine Equipment Program per state fiscal year. Applications may not request funding for projects intended to be disbursed over multiple state fiscal years.

No Matching Funds Requirement

No matching funds are required for this program; however, the application should include an explanation of how any portion of the project or purchase price not covered by the Universal Service Fund will be paid for. In addition, commitment of other resources toward a project or purchase may be considered as a positive factor when rating the grant applications.

Grant Application Submission

All applicants are required to submit a signed cover sheet, an affidavit that states that the medical facility meets the qualifications for the grant as listed on page 2, a budget summary form, and project narrative. No late applications will be considered.

Applications may be submitted to the Commission by any of the following methods and its relating deadline:

U.S Postal Service	Commercial Carrier or Hand Delivery	FAX Submission
Public Service Commission Attn.: Anita Sprenger P.O. Box 7854 Madison, WI 53707-7854	Public Service Commission Attn.: Anita Sprenger 610 N. Whitney Way Madison, WI 53705	Public Service Commission Attn.: Anita Sprenger (608) 266-3957
Postmarked October 15, 2003	Delivered by 4:00 p.m. on October 15, 2003	Received by the PSC by October 15, 2003

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the Commission receives all documents in a readable format prior to the deadline.

Application Procedure

A complete application includes the following items and should be assembled in the following order:

1. Universal Service Program Grant Application Form

Use the form (#2083) included in this application booklet. Signature of the certifying representative of the organization is required in Section II of the form. Do not fill out the first two lines of Section I or Section III of this form.

2. Affidavit of Eligibility

Use the form included in this application package. The form includes a statement certifying that the Universal Service Fund support will be used for the purpose granted. This is required by Wis. Admin Code PSC § 160.115(5)(f). The form must be signed by a certifying representative of the organization.

3. Budget Summary

Use the form included in this application package. Attach price quotes from vendors to the summary.

4. Project Narrative

The narrative should address the criteria listed in the *Review Criteria* listed below.

The application must be submitted by the deadline date. Do not use binders, plastic covers, folders, or cover sheets other than the one included in this application package. Once filed, all applications become the property of the Commission, are subject to open records laws of the state, and will not be returned to the applicant.

Review Criteria

In preparing the Project Narrative, the criteria should be addressed in the order in which they are listed below. Please use the headings provided below. Each criterion should be addressed separately and completely so the response stands alone and does not refer to outside sources. Failure to address any criterion will result in reduction of points by the reviewers. The page size should be standard 8 1/2" x 11," with a legible font no smaller than 11 points, and a minimum of one-inch margins throughout. **The entire Project Narrative section should be no more than six (6) single-sided and single-spaced numbered pages.**

1 Applicant Overview

- Briefly describe the applicant organization(s) and a description of the population being served by the organization. Include a description of rural, underserved or disabled populations served by the organization.

2 Project Purpose

- Define the specific need or problem that is currently not being met.
- Describe how the specific need or problem may be met through purchase of telecommunications equipment.
- Describe in detail how the purchase of the equipment will promote technologically advanced medical services, enhance access to medical care in rural or underserved areas of the state or enhance access to medical care by underserved populations or persons with disabilities.

3 Project Outcomes

- Identify realistic, measurable outcomes expected to result from the purchase of the telecommunications equipment. Anticipated outcomes should relate to the need/problem statement.

4 Description of Equipment to be Purchased

- Describe the equipment to be purchased including a description of how the equipment operates.
- Describe any installation costs, costs for training for operating the equipment, warranties, or maintenance agreements included in the purchase price of the equipment.
- Identify the vendors for each piece of equipment proposed to be purchased. If the vendor is not yet selected, provide information on the process to be used for selecting the vendor.
- Explain why this equipment was selected.
- Describe any partnerships, community support or other collaborations with individuals or organizations that will be involved in the purchase of the equipment.

5 Budget Detail

- Describe the steps taken to secure the telecommunications equipment at reasonable prices. Obtaining several bids for the equipment and reporting the results of the cost review process can accomplish this.
- Identify the vendors for each piece of the telecommunication equipment being purchased or describe the process being used to select a vendor. If the applicant is chosen to receive a grant under this program, copies of bids may be required to be submitted prior to release of grant dollars.
- List and describe co-funding sources, partnerships and other relationships or commitments that are part of the project.

6 Evaluation

- Explain how the project will be evaluated after the equipment is installed.
- Describe any measurement tools that will be used to determine the extent to which the project meets each of its objectives.

Review and Selection Process

All grant applications will be subject to a screening and review process conducted by Commission staff, a review team and the Commissioners. Reviewers will have expertise in technical or programmatic aspects of information systems, medicine, telecommunications or universal service issues. The process is outlined below:

Initial Screening

Commission staff will conduct an initial screening of all applications. The applications will be screened for timeliness of filing, and eligibility of the applicant as a nonprofit medical clinic or public health agency as defined in PSC §§160.115(b) and (c) and completeness of the application. Any application that fails the initial screening may be eliminated from further review.

Application Review

A panel of technology or program professionals will review applications passing the initial screening. The reviewers will use a rating checklist that gives a score to each application based on the criteria outlined in the *Review Criteria* section. Particular attention will be paid to the potential success of the project to promote technologically advanced medical services, to enhance access to medical care in rural or underserved areas of the state or to enhance access to medical care by underserved populations or persons with disabilities. Results of this analysis and review will be reported in a memorandum to the Commissioners.

Final Decision on Grant Awards

In making the final grant funding decisions, the Commission shall consider information including the following:

- Is the applicant a nonprofit medical clinic or public health agency located in Wisconsin?
- Will the purchase of the telecommunication equipment promote technologically advanced medical services, enhance access to medical care in rural or underserved areas of the state or enhance access to medical care by underserved populations or persons with disabilities?
- Is the applicant able to pay for the portion of the cost of the project not funded under the USF grant?
- What steps has the applicant taken steps to secure the equipment at reasonable prices?

Public health agencies and nonprofit organizations that operate at more than one location, may receive USF support for telecommunications equipment at more than one location, but before approving an application involving an additional location, the Commission shall consider how much total USF support has been received by an agency or organization in the fiscal year, and the total amount remaining to be disbursed for the fiscal year.

In addition, the Commission must determine if the applicant has filed all the required information listed in this application guideline. The Commission may consider other factors in its decision-making such as the analysis provided by staff, analysis of the review panel, geographic distribution of the proposed grants, diversity of needs being met by the proposed grants and availability of funds.

The Commission makes its decision in Open Meetings of the Commission.

All grant applicants will be notified in writing of intended award decisions approximately three months after the application deadline.

Reporting and Payment Process

Grant projects are expected to start within two months of award notification. Applicants should notify the Commission if this expectation cannot be met. A *Summary Financial Statement* will be enclosed with the letter notifying applicants that they have received a grant award. This statement must be used to request reimbursement for funds expended under the grant award. Grant awardees will be required to submit a brief final evaluation report describing how well the project is promoting technologically advanced medical services, enhancing access to medical care in rural or underserved areas of the state, or enhancing access to medical care by underserved populations or persons with disabilities. Failure to submit the final evaluation report will be considered breach of the grant contract. Details regarding these filings will be included in the letter notifying applicants of the grant award.

The Commission retains the right to revoke a grant if the funded applicant and project do not comply with Commission guidelines or fail to implement the project in accordance with the application as submitted and approved. In addition, the Commission reserves the right to take any other action allowed by law in the event an approved project is implemented in a manner inconsistent with the Telemedicine Program.

Withdrawal of Application

Applicants may withdraw their proposal at any time by providing a written request to the Commission.

False, Misleading, or Omitted Statements

False or misleading statements or omissions that render the information provided on an application to be false or misleading are grounds for rejection of an application, for denial, or for termination of funding. The applicant may also be required to reimburse the Universal Service Fund. In addition, the Commission reserves the right to take any other action allowed by law.

No Obligation for Future Funding

If an application is selected for funding, the Commission has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Funding is limited to the amount awarded by the Commission when it makes its decision on grant awards. A subsequent award of funding for purchase of additional equipment is entirely at the discretion of the Commission.

Technical Assistance

Staff will provide limited technical assistance to all prospective applicants as staff resources allow, until the time that a proposal has been submitted to the Commission. Staff will only

provide answers to specific questions and make general comments in regard to the grant application guidelines and forms. Staff will not provide specific technical suggestions for a particular applicant nor review a draft copy of a forthcoming application.

In compliance with state regulations regarding conflict of interest and open records, Commissioners will not provide any specific advice or assistance to applicants. All applicants will be referred to Commission staff.

For Further Information, Contact:

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Madison WI 53707-7854

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WEB PAGE: <http://www.psc.wi.gov>

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